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AUTHOR Hodges, Carol
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ABSTRACT

Intermediate grade teachers can help students deal with content area reading problems by using the directed reading activity (DRA) approach. Prior to using this approach the teacher needs to decide the major concepts to be emphasized in the content selection, the vocabulary terms to be taught, the specific skills to be taught to aid in understanding, and the supplementary materials to use. The first step in using the DRA framework involves preparing students for reading through methods, such as SQ3R, which provide direction and purpose setting for reading. SQ3R guides students through a chapter and introduces them to questions and advance organizers that can facilitate learning and discussion. During the next step in the DRA, silent reading, study guides can be provided to help students structure the reading of text. The third step provides opportunities such as reports, trips, films, experiments, and artwork for students to use their newly learned skills and concepts in a new setting. The concluding activities (comprehension checks) allow time for synthesizing the bits and pieces that have been studied. (Appendixes include a diagram of selected variables that influence comprehension, a framework for DRAs, directions for using the DRA approach in content area reading, an example of a semantic mapping exercise to evaluate background information and an example of remapping to diagnose concept growth, suggestions for developing vocabulary, a discussion of the SQ3R method, suggestions for preparing children to read chapters in a content text, and rewriting materials to adapt to the needs of poor readers.) (HOD)

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ENHANCING INTERMEDIATE GRADE STUDENTS' COMPREHENSION OF AND ATTITUDE TOWARD READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

PRESENTED BY DR. CAROL HODGES

AT THE

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION'S

FOURTH EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 2-5, 1982

Dr. Carol Hodges
320 B Bacon
State University College at Buffalo
1300 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14222

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Introduction

The basic goals of reading in any area are to enable children to gain an

understanding of the world and themselves
develop appreciations and interests
find solutions to their personal and group problems

As teachers you are probably aware of numerous students who have difficulty understanding content area reading material despite their having received basic reading skills instruction or corrective training in separate reading classes. To overcome these shortcomings in content area reading there are at least three basic paths to follow:

1. the first is to completely ignore the difficulty and to expect all students to read whatever material is available or they simply fail.

2. the second is to ignore reading materials completely and to teach your students by other means. Provide them with the material in lecture form followed by discussions, use audio-visual aids such as films, filmstrips, television, and records. Or immerse them in the topic via the use of guests who provide information through lectures, pictures, and realia.

3. the third path is to provide the students with tools to guide them in reading content area material. Obviously my bias as a teacher educator, whose specialization is reading, is this third path. While I certainly appreciate the use of the multi-media approach suggested in option #2, I feel that part of any multi-media approach should include reading materials. A student can learn in many ways. He observes, listens, manipulates, interacts with people directly, and reads. But while all of these learning methods are important, reading is probably the most important because it is the tool for lifelong learning about the world and ourselves. A child who does not learn to read content area material will be disadvantaged in his strivings for lifelong learning. When a child leaves school he/she will no longer have a teacher to provide appropriate discussions, films, art projects, or guest lectures, but books, magazines, newspapers and other printed material will always be available.

If we realize that many social studies texts and trade books are difficult for our students to read, why don't we teach them how to approach these kinds of materials? Many teachers feel that they simply do not have enough time to cover the social studies content and reading skills too. What most are unaware of is that there does not have to be a dichotomy. The reading skills can be taught simultanesouly with the course content. Intermediate grade teachers can help students deal with these problems with the confines of their content area programs. The directed reading lesson approach that you all learned about in your first college reading course is a very useful approach in reading in any content area. The suggestions that I would like to share with you today are based on the directed reading lesson approach and are useful for teachers who use a uni-test, multi-test, or multi-media approach. These suggestions have been the basis for many successful content area units which teachers who have been in my graduate reading courses have produced.

Teacher-made decisions

To produce a successful content area unit you must begin by making some crucial decisions about the subject matter. The first decision which must be made concerns the content to be taught. Whether you are following a chapter in a district-mandated text or have chosen your own topic, not all of the context about a topic can or should be covered with the same emphasis or sequence which is suggested by the text or trade book. Each teacher must ask himself/herself how important each concept is relative to the whole unit. For instance, if the topic is about the structure of the United States Government, one goal might be that the students realize how the various branches provide checks and balances on one another. After this first decision about important content is made writing down the goals will be helpful as further decisions are being

made about which concepts require background information, which vocabulary terms need to be developed, what materials are needed for display, and which reading and/or study skills need to be taught. You can match goals and decisions to make sure that each concept which you want to cover will receive the appropriate introduction and coverage. These goals will also provide a direction for student evaluation at the end of the unit.

A second decision has to do with the vocabulary terms which need to be taught. One of the most persistent reading problems associated with content area material has to do with vocabulary. Even though publishers may assure us that a text or trade book has a readability formula, these formulas often do not take into consideration technical terms which may be hard to pronounce or difficult to understand. They also fail to consider known words which are used in unknown ways, e.g., mouth of the river, basin. A further problem has to do with the rapid rate at which the unfamiliar words are presented. Thus it becomes necessary for you to preview the available written material and then decide with which terms your students will need help. Texts often suggest unfamiliar terms, but you are best able to make such a decision based on your personal diagnosis of students' needs, the importance of a term to the concepts to be learned, and the amount of help which the texts give with the meaning or pronunciation.

Further decisions must be made regarding the specific skills your students need in order to learn the concepts chosen. Here again, your knowledge of the class, the nature of the subject matter, and the specific organization of material to be read are important considerations. For instance, content area texts and trade books frequently use graphic materials such as charts,

tables, graphs, photos, maps, and illustrations to help explain a concept. Graphic aids such as these are only useful if the students know how to "read" them with understanding and if they learn to pay at least as much attention to them as the text. Therefore, you might preview the material to discover if it contains graphic aids with which your students have not had experience or for which they may need a review. Then special attention can be drawn to the graphic material and help given to its interpretation. For instance, if maps are to be an integral part of the content, students may be taught how to examine the title of a map to determine what area is being represented and what type of information is given about the area. Graphic aids will be less often disregarded by readers if they have training in their use. The time taken to pre-teach such graphic skills is well spent because it facilitates learning from textual material by communicating features of objects or data that do not lend themselves to written description. Furthermore, information about the use of graphic aids is more likely to be retained and used again when it is taught in a context in which the child can actually use it. Thus you will be less likely to have to reteach the skills later, another time saver.

A final decision deals with the appropriate <u>supplementary materials</u> which are needed to repeat, clarify, and extend the content chosen. These may include books, magazines, travel brochures with appropriate readability levels, maps, pictures, science equipment, films, filmstrips, tapes, records, and realia, such as crafts, costumes, and food.

Using the DRA Framework

The rest of our time will be devoted to using the framework of the DRA to introduce you to some instructional techniques that you can use whether you use one text or multiple texts and/or tradebooks. In this way children will be motivated to read the material, background information can be presented to help them with new content which may be beyond their experience, key vocabulary terms can be presented, children can be prepared to read the material by previewing it with the help of the teacher, purpose setting questions can be discussed, assigned study guides can be provided, and silent reading can proceed. During the silent reading, you are free to provide direct instruction to those children who require special help with other aspects of reading. The time spent working on reading skills will be more than made up when children are no longer frustrated by 50 minute group oral reading periods and when all children find that they can read some kind of material associated with the topic.

Preparation for reading

As you can see on the overhead projector STEP ONE involves the preparation for reading. This includes providing concept development and motivation by supplying background experiences and developing vocabulary. The amount of time spent on this step will depend upon your student's reading and study skills and their experiences with the topic.

Motivation - Research tends to show that children can read material with more ease if it interests them. Therefore, although sometimes difficult, the goal here is to have each student <u>wanting</u> to learn more about the topic. You can do this by involving them as much as possible in the

learning act. For instance, begin a unit with:

fieldtrips
films
filmstrips
maps
records
tapes
demonstrations

something which involves them in the learning, that will pique their interest.

Background information - While we all intuitively believed it, research has begun to document the idea that children will be better able to comprehend what they read if they have had some direct or vicarious experience with the concept (Pearson and Johnson, 1978, p. 24). Much of the material in content area texts and trade books goes beyond what intermediate students have experienced. Unless they are provided with background experiences, there will be a limit placed on what they will be able to comprehend. Much of what you do to motivate students will also provide an organizational framework into which new information can be assimilated. In effect you are building a bridge from the "old" to the "new." In assuming that the learner will acquire concepts simply by reading the text, we build a barrier to content learning because the concepts necessary for comprehension of the written material are often not acquired. The time taken to provide background experiences will help insure that the students have the necessary "mind-set" or bridge so that comprehension of the material will be facilitated during silent reading. It will allow more children to "read between the lines" and thus save time later.

One way in which to diagnose your students' background knowledge about a topic is a technique called semantic mapping. (Pearson & Johnson, 1978). By asking students to call out words associated with a main idea from the unit, you can find out what concepts children do and do not know in relation to the main ideas. For example, if a social studies unit pertains to political regions, a teacher might begin by putting the words U.S. Government on the board and asking the students to think of all the words they know that are somehow associated with the government. A list of the terms contributed by the students can be written on the board and then put into categories. If, for instance, President and Vice President are among some of the words mentioned, they can be categorized together as people associated with the government. Perhaps other words might fall into such categories as functions of the government and levels of the government, buildings associated with governmental activities, etc. A lively discussion usually follows such a mapping session and many children learn new concepts and vocabulary on the spot. An interesting evaluative device at the end of the social studies unit is to ask the children to "re-map" the word with which the unit started and compare the old and new semantic maps. Thus, the word U.S. Government should elicit many new responses the second time around if learning has taken place.

Many students would also profit from being given an oral summary of key points contained in text material. Such a summary, based on the decisions which you made earlier regarding important concepts, can provide another type of advanced organizer or mind-set for reading.

Vocabulary - often a major hurdle for students is the technical language of a particular subject. A primary difficulty for many learners is that we too often assume that they will acquire vocabulary simply by reading the text and looking up the words in a dictionary or glossary. This seldom occurs. To assist them in acquiring important concepts, the major new vocabulary terms need to be pretaught. During the initial decision making process, you will try to decide with which terms the students may need help. One further way to diagnose students' vocabulary needs is to be alert during the discussion which is part of the semantic mapping session.

When you have decided on the vocabulary to be pre-taught, help can be provided in a number of ways to prevent boredom and because different words require different procedures. It is important, however, that each procedure deal with both the pronunciation and meaning of the word. One procedure which may be followed involves four steps:

1. presentation - write the words on the chalkboard or on dittoed pages in the context of a phrase or sentence, preferably one taken from the material to be read. Begin by having the students try to decode the underlined words one at a time using word identification clues. If no one can decode them, tell them the words. Have each of the sentences read orally.
2. discussion - as each word is identified, inquire whether anyone recognized its meaning. Ask if anyone can use the word in a new sentence. This is easier than defining a word and use can still demonstrate if a word meaning is known or not. Students may also be asked to give synonyms for a word or define it by indicating its semantic features. You can best judge how much

time should be given to the discussion of each word.

3. writing - Students should be given the opportunity to write each word themselves. A student dictionary or word book is a helpful device. Students write the unknown word on a page or word card. Under the word or on the reverse side of the card a definition is added, the word is used in a sentence, or a picture is drawn to aid in remembering the pronunciation and meaning of the word. These word cards are also useful for ther later activities - such as classification of concepts.
4. activity - an activity may be warranted if enough new words are being introduced. This may be in the form of completing sentences using new words, matching words and definitions, or playing a game.

After each vocabulary word has been introduced in some manner similar to the one just discussed, you may wish to use another useful vocabulary tool called the structured overview (Earle & Barron, 1973). This device is an idea framework, in some ways similar to a semantic map, which can be used to show the relationships between the new words. Using the vocabulary discussion and background information which you presented, you and the class arrange the vocabulary in a way that will help them to see how terms are related to one another and to previously learned concepts. The overview can be written on the chalkboard and then later transferred to oak tag for a permanent chart to which students can refer if they later experience problems seeing relationships. Several structured overviews can be designed for a unit in order to illustrate how new information fits into that which

has been previously presented. Remember, however, that this is only an overview. Don't expect that students will master everything at this point.

As teachers we can become so expert about the vocabulary in our units that we assume others are knowledgeable also. Students tune out when they cannot understand the concepts, because they cannot manage the words on which ideas ride. If you regard vocabulary development as an important component of content area learning you will find that strategies such as those suggested will facilitate the students higher-order learning and will make additional vocabulary instruction unnecessary for many if not most students, thus saving time later.

Direction and Purpose Setting for Reading

Even with background information, and vocabulary development, children may still have problems reading from a social studies text or trade book if they have been reading primarily narrative materials. For this reason, it is important for the teacher to help children learn at least one way to approach a chapter. One such procedure is the SQ3R (Robinson, 1961) method, which is used in secondary schools. This method may be simplified somewhat for intermediate children so that they are first directed to read the title of the chapter. Then the introductory paragraph might be read aloud by the teacher or a student who has had a chance to look it over, followed by questions from the teacher like: Do you know anything about this topic already? How does it relate to what we have been studying? Secondly, the children might be directed to browse through the chapter or

section to look at the graphic material and to examine bold-faced headings and sub-headings which might give clues to the information to be derived from the section. Again you can direct their attention to certain features and ask questions which will help the students relate the various parts of the chapter. Questions such as: Can anyone tell us what this heading means? How does it relate to the title? What does the map on page 286 tell us about the District of Columbia? How will the picture on page 288 help you when you make a model of tne Capitol? Finally, to conclude the survey, the students could be directed to read the summary paragraph and any questions which the authors have included. Children may be asked if they have any questions which the authors have included. Children may be asked if they have any questions which they might like to have answered after surveying the materials.

By this time students should anticipate that certain new understandings are to be gained. Therefore it is important to share the purposes of the unit with them by discussing:

content: in this unit we will want to learn....
process: you will learn much about this topic if you can
1) accurately interpret information on maps and pictures
2) recognize sequential patterns

Before silent reading takes place, questions should be assigned (both teacher or book prepared and those previously mentioned by children) to provide some purpose for reading and studying. I would suggest that these questions be in written form so that children do not forget them and that they be read and discussed orally so that everyone understands what information they are reading to find. A chart may be prepared which will be displayed in a prominent place in the room. This chart should help students keep objectives in mind and to check their accomplishments from time to time as the unit progresses. For

example, the chart might be entitled - What Do We Want to Learn About Our Government? Questions such as the following might appear:

1) Which branch of our government makes the laws?
2) What is the highest law of the land?

Different sets of questions may be assigned to various children so that they are provided with questions that they are likely to be able to handle and which can be answered from the books that they are able to read if you are using a multi-book approach. Preparing students to read expository material by teaching them ways to approach a chapter and by offering them purpose setting questions as advance organizers facilitates their learning by providing them with a clearer idea of what information to attend to and therefore facilitates later discussions.

Finally, if you are aware that your whole class is deficient in certain skills, then skills teaching should take place before they begin silent reading (e.g. map skills, understanding of sequential paragraphs). If most of the students already know how to accomplish a certain skill, only a brief review may be necessary.

Silent Reading and Skill Groups

Now, silent reading begins and can continue for one or several periods depending on how much information various students are looking for.

Just as you have a spread of reading ability in your reading classes, you will experience a similar one in a content area. There will probably be a small group of students for whom the book represents their independent level. These students can read the text quickly and be provided with other

challenges to help them learn the major concepts. Then there will probably be a larger group for whom the text represents their instructional level. It may be necessary to work with them in the text to help them build the concepts needed. And finally there will inevitably be a group of students for whom the text represents their frustration level. These students may need to abandon the text and be given simpler materials, on the same topic, to read in order to understand the concepts involved. In some cases material may have to be re-written. Rewriting can adapt materials to diagnosed needs of poor readers. But because rewriting takes time and effort, it should be done using material that is worthwhile, timely, and pertinent to topics being discussed in class. Craig (1977) has outlined a step-by-step procedure for rewriting material which is included in your handout.

Some teachers have found that study guides (Cunningham and Shablak, 1975, Herber, 1978) are useful tools for helping students structure the reading of the text material. There is no standard form for a study guide. Pages 13 through 18 in your handout offer a brief introduction to the concept. (For further information consult the reference list.) Some points to remember about study guides:

start small - learn from your mistakes
make them simple, a complicated one will only confuse instead of help
avoid overcrowding print--this overwhelms students
make it interesting--motivating
be sure it reflects the instructional decisions regarding content and processes which you made earlier
walk through the guide with your students so that they understand what they are to do
give different study guides to different ability levels or prepare one guide with differentiated directions

Another device which leads students through the major ideas and supporting details within a chapter of a book is that technique described by Cunningham & Shablak (1975) as the Selective Reading Guide-O-Rama. It provides cues to students as to which information is important and which can be skimmed. After you have decided what major concepts and supporting details are important for a unit, go through the text identifying those portions that provide that information. Perhaps penciling in "+", "-" as guides or "M" for main idea and a "D" for supporting detail. Then you prepare a written guide that leads the students to the important ideas. For instance:

p. 278 Look at the map on this page. Pay special attention to the location of Washington, D.C. Skim this page, we read it orally in class.

p. 279-281 Read these pages to learn what a nation is. Pay particular attention to the chart on page 280.

p. 282 para. 5-8. Read this section very carefully. The order of events is very important. You will want to remember this information for our class discussion.

The completed guide should move through the chapter in a logical order. One important point is to gradually wean students away from such guides as they learn the mechanics of studying a text structurally.

Direction in and Application of Skills

Once silent reading is taking place, whether from a text, trade book, magazine, or whatever, you are free to move around and work with individuals and/or small groups providing guidance in the continued development of skills and developing major concepts for everyone. For instance, some advanced students

may need help with various locating or organizational skills such as using reference books, outlining, or notetaking to facilitate their independent research. Other average students may need help learning to comprehend syntactically complicated sentences or paragraphs whose patterns they have not had experience with such as sequence. You might provide further assistance to slow learners by going through the chapter with them, summarizing key points as you go along; writing major headings on the board in outline form; and having them tell you about the chapter using the outline as a prompt, thus providing a study model for them.

Enrichment Activities

The last step before the concluding activities of a unit provides opportunities for the students to use newly learned skills and concepts in a new setting. Various activities may be presented and assigned involving:

reports	experiments
trips	artwork
films	guests

superior readers - It is important to provide challenges for superior readers--not just more ditto sheets. They may be interested in some of the following:

- reading related biographies and autobiographies
- reading related fiction
- working with word histroies
- making filmstrips
- making murals
- costuming characters
- relating current news to the topic
- read orally to less able readers, or preparing tapes of the text for less able readers to listen to
- interviewing characters

slow readers - It is just as important to make some accommodations for slower readers. Some of these have been mentioned, such as small group

skill lessons, study guides, and rewriting material. Other opportunities may involve:

--using pictures, slides or filmstrips as a focus for an oral discussion of the important terms and content.

--reshowing a film used to introduce the chapter. Discussing its content in greater detail.

--assigning readers to a topic for which you know there are easy-to-read books available in the library or materials center.

--bring in pictures for a picture identification game pertaining to better known buildings and monuments.

Comprehension Check

When sufficient silent reading, skill work, and independent activities have been done it is time to check to see how much learning has taken place. What ought to be done at the end of a chapter depends on the:

the children
the content they've been studying
your original objectives
nature of the guidance and independent activities you have given

The goals of any concluding activities should allow time for synthesizing the bits and pieces that have been studied in various ways. Thus they could lead to further study if pieces are missing. They should allow for an assessment of learning: to collect information to be used for subsequent instruction. Certainly each unit should be interspersed with and conclude with discussions so that everyone can participate, communicating what they've learned and enjoyed from whatever level of reading and various activities they have done.

If you record significant details of these discussions on the board, these can be summarized and then duplicated for all to read and use as a review. Care should be taken to check the chart provided during the preparation stage to insure that all the important questions have been answered from the readings, reports, and other activities.

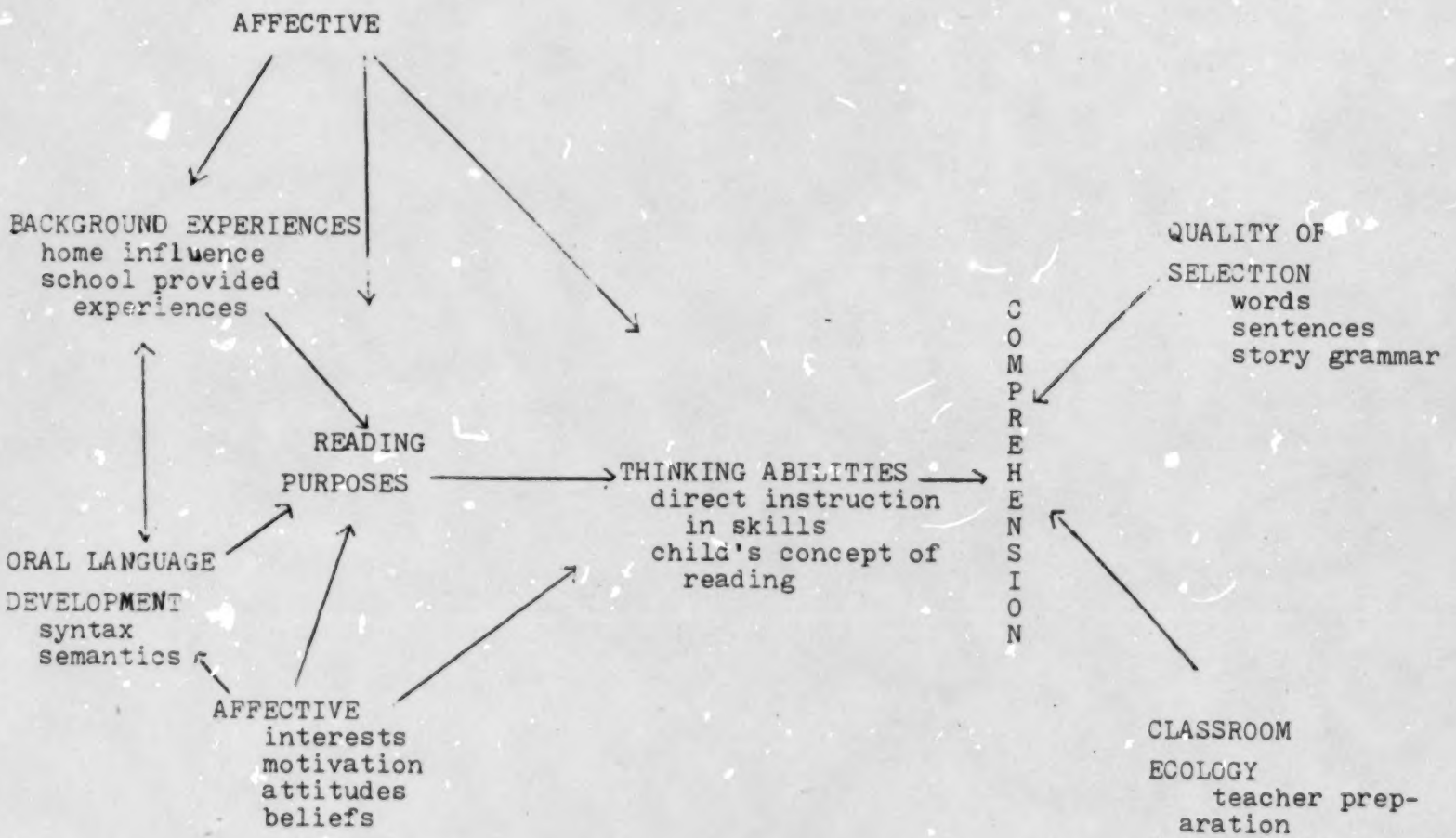
Virtually any of the activities already discussed are appropriate as concluding ones. Every unit does not have to end with a test. One of the best evaluative devices that I've ever seen involved an art project in which groups of students drew very large murals portraying various stages in the history of the state in which they lived. The details illustrated in these murals provided excellent proof that they understood the history of their state.

Providing a directed content area reading activity such as the one just described in no way elininates the multi-media extras that so often add the pizazz to a unit. These extras can provide background information; they can provide for very interesting concluding activities. The directed reading stages simply provide some assurance that the students will have the require vocabulary development and reading/study skills to cope with the written information whether it is provided by one or more books.

None of the ideas suggested here are new or earth-shaking, but observations, interviews, and numerous informal conversations with teachers illustrate that many of them seldom use these instructional practices in their classrooms while teaching in the content areas, because they are convinced that using such practices are too time-consuming. Teachers in my reading courses, who have learned to use many of the techniques which I have suggested here, often later report that contrary to their original skepticism about their use, they found that

the techniques really did save time and that their students used their newly learned skills not only in social studies, but also in other subjects such as science and reading. Thus while I am not suggesting that reading is the only way to help children gain an understanding of the world and of themselves, I do believe that a child who does not learn to read expository material, such as that seen in content area and tradebook books, will be disadvantaged in his/her strivings for lifelong learning.

SELECTED VARIABLES WHICH INFLUENCE COMPREHENSION*



*Adapted from a model by L. Harris & C. Smith and based on current research in reading comprehension.

A FRAMEWORK FOR HELPING INTERMEDIATE GRADE STUDENTS COMPREHEND CONTENT AREA TEXTS AND TRADEBOOKS

I. TEACHER DECISIONS

- major concepts to be emphasized in the selection
- vocabulary terms to be taught
- specific skills to be taught to aid understanding
- appropriate supplementary materials needed

II. DIRECTED READING ACTIVITY FRAMEWORK

STEP 1 Preparation for Reading

- motivation
- concept development
- vocabulary development

STEP 2 Direction and Purpose Setting for Reading

- guiding through the chapter
- sharing goals and purpose setting
- initial skill teaching

STEP 3 Silent Reading

STEP 4 Direct Skill Instruction and Application

- skill groups
- various study guides

STEP 5 Opportunities for Using Skills and Information

STEP 6 Comprehension Check - Concluding Activities

Using the Directed Reading Activity (DRA) Approach

in Content Area Reading

An integral part of a basal reader teacher's guide or manual is the systematic description of how to teach a reading lesson. The ultimate purpose behind each story in a basal reader is to teach youngsters skills and abilities needed to become independent readers. The set of procedures for teaching a reading lesson has been commonly referred to as a directed reading activity (DRA). The DRA provides a framework to insure systematic and sequential growth of reading and language abilities. The DRA framework can also be utilized by intermediate grade teachers when they are teaching in the content areas.

STEP I - Preparation for Reading

A. Concept development - relate the subject matter ideas to the background experience of the class. Present vicarious experiences (e.g. movie) when the ideas are not familiar to the children.

B. Motivation - capture as much interest in reading about the subject as possible by looking at the pictures, discussing the topic, etc.

C. Vocabulary - discuss new words in a meaningful setting. Provide practice activities to help teach the words.

STEP II - Directing and Purpose-setting for Reading

Before reading the chapter silently the teacher provides the children with a purpose question(s) or a study guide to direct their reading. Teach the students how to survey a chapter in order to gain clues about the information which might be derived from each section and the relationship between the sections.

STEP III - Silent Reading

The amount read silently will depend upon the chapter's length, content, and student's ability. Avoid oral "round room" reading at this time.

STEP IV - Direction, Instruction in and Application of Reading Skills
(Part of this is sometimes done before silent reading.)

Using the chapter as a vehicle, specific skills and abilities are taught, depending upon student needs. Following direct

instruction, teachers can use a variety of practice activities to further develop the skills. The skills taught should be those specifically needed by your students in order to understand the chapter. This might include comprehension and study skills.

The follow up practice may include the use of games, teacher-made worksheets and if appropriate, workbook exercises.

STEP V - Provide Enrichment Activities

These activities may connect the unit with such things as art, music, or creative writing activities. They may lead the children to read further material on the same topic. Examples are:

A. reports
B. viewing slides of the topic
C. looking for interesting related pictures
D. checking the TV for topics related information programs
E. making maps of the area
F. inviting guests in to discuss the topic

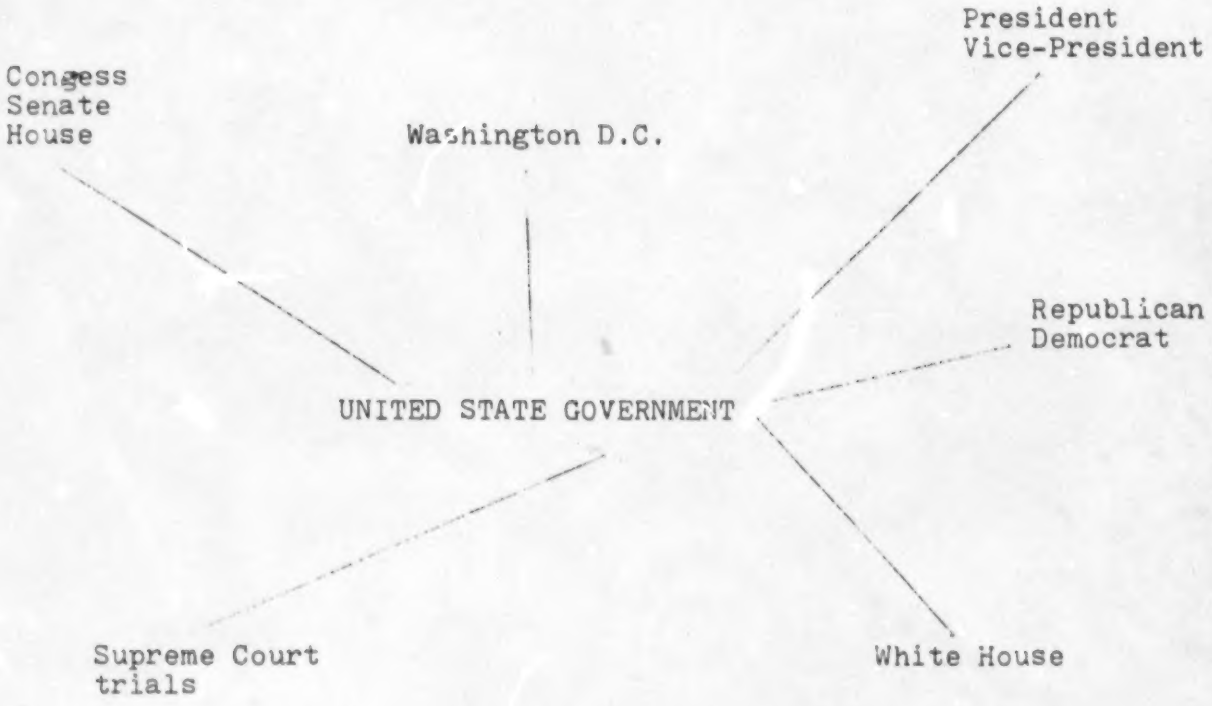
These activities and others like them provide opportunities for the students to use their newly learned skills and concepts in a new setting.

STEP VI - Comprehension Check

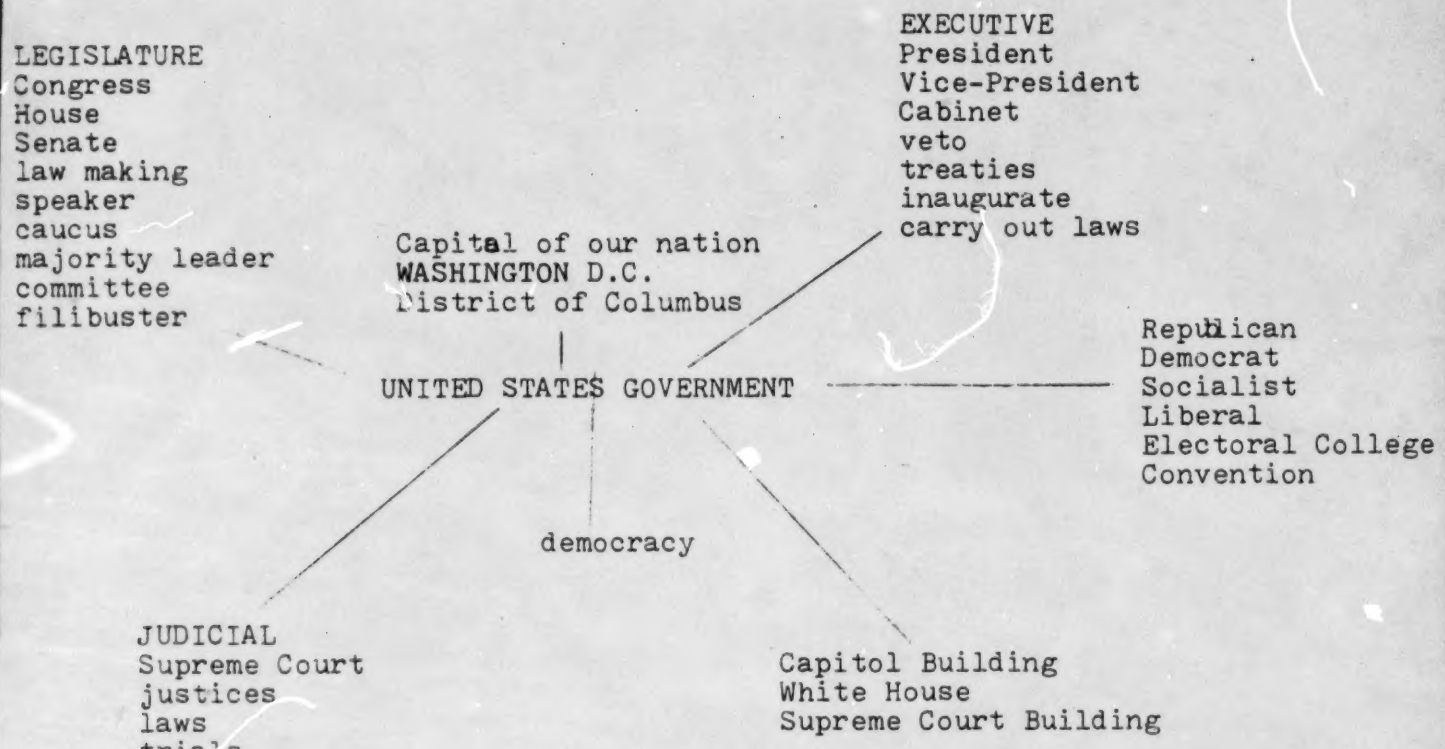
Lead children to think and talk about what they read, saw and heard.

A. Ask children to answer the purpose setting questions(s).
B. Ask other comprehension questions that require children to recall facts and main ideas, infer ideas, and react critically and personally to the topic. A good balance of comprehension questions is very important in improving children's comprehension.
C. Children may be asked to read orally to clarify their answers.

AN EXAMPLE OF A SEMANTIC MAPPING EXERCISE
TO EVALUATE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE



AN EXAMPLE OF SEMANTIC RE-MAPPING TO DIAGNOSE
CONCEPT GROWTH



DEVELOPING VOCABULARY FOR A CONTENT UNIT

PRESENT: visually in context
verbally

DISCUSS: meaningfully
use in a new sentence

WRITE: in isolation
in a new context

ACTIVITY: completion exercise
matching exercise
games

1. Laws are made in the Legislative branch.

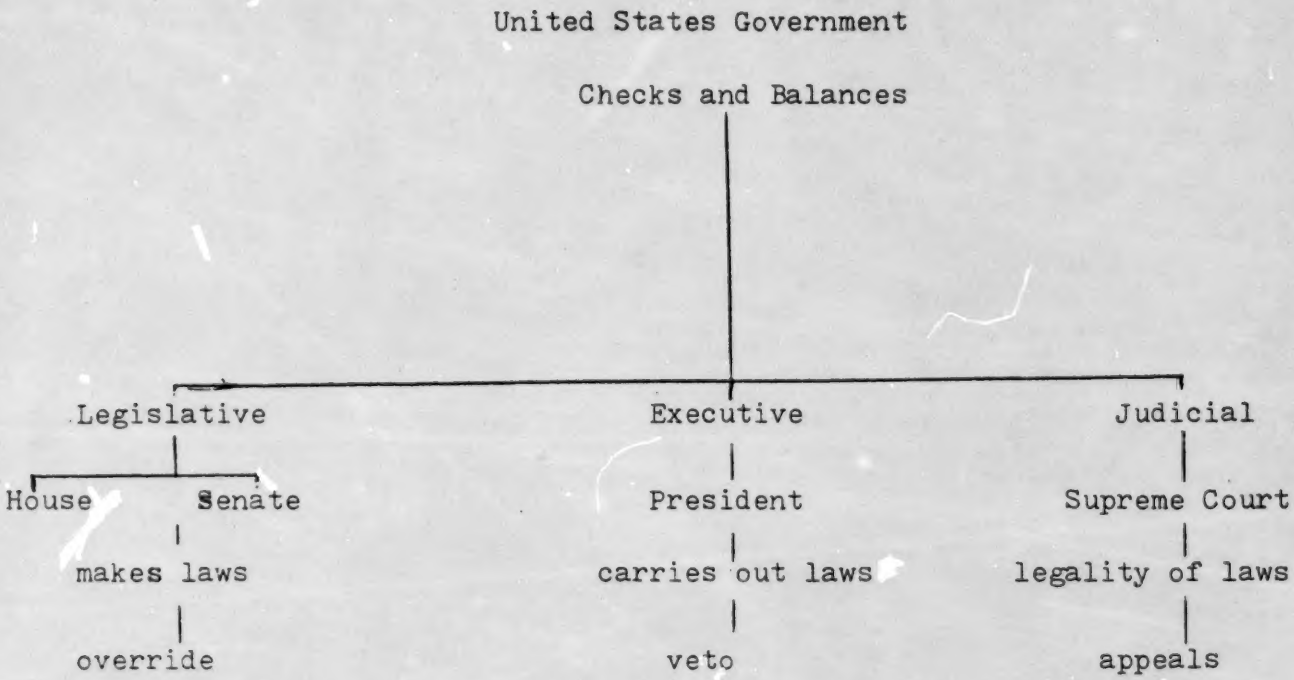
P. Can anyone tell me what the underlined word says? Yes, it is Legislative. Who will read the sentence for me? Fine. Let's read it together.

D. Does anyone know what Legislative means? Or can anyone use it in a sentence. Let me help. If I tell you that the word legislative has something to do with making laws, does that give you a clue. Look at the sentence again. In our government which part has to do with making laws? Yes, the Congress. Very good!! The Congress is the Legislative branch of our government.

W. Write the word Legislative on one side of your word card. Now turn it over and write a sentence using that word. Let's hear some examples of what you might write. Yes, that is a good one. Very nice. Let's see if we can help you with that one a little bit.

A. If many words are introduced at one time an activity may be needed to provide practice.

A STRUCTURED OVERVIEW FOR DEVELOPING VOCABULARY RELATIONSHIPS



SQ3R METHOD OF STUDY

The SQ3R method of study was designed to take advantage of the consistent format in most traditional content textbooks. Each chapter generally contains a title, an introduction, a number of headings and subheadings, a concluding or summary statement, and some questions posed by the textbook author(s) at the end of the chapter. This chapter leads naturally to the five steps which make up the SQ3R procedure:

1. Survey

Perhaps the most important single element in the procedure is the initial survey or previous step. The survey should provide each student with an overview of the chapter content. The survey step should take the students logically through the chapter, seeking to answer these questions: "What is this chapter about? "What kind of information does the author tell us about this subject?"

The survey step then requires the student to read and think about the chapter title, the introductory paragraph(s), the headings and subheadings, the concluding paragraph, and the end-of-chapter questions. In addition, students are encouraged to survey the pictorial information within the chapter. At the conclusion of this step, the students should have a general understanding of the chapter content.

2. Question

Students now should be ready for a more detailed study of the chapter. The question step provides a purpose for reading the material in more detail. Very simply, the student selects the first boldface topic in the chapter, reads it, and proceeds to restate it in the form of a question. An example may help to illustrate this procedure. The subtopic "The House of Representatives," would become in question form, "What jobs are performed in the House of Representatives?" The student now is ready to move to the third step.

3. Read

The first of the three "R" steps is to read the material immediately following the first subtopic. The purpose of this reading will be to find the answer to the question posed in step two. With this very specific question in mind, students will tend to move fairly rapidly through the material in pursuit of the answer. Once they have finished reading the material under the first heading, students are ready to move to step four of the procedure.

4. Recite

At this point, students are asked to pause and reflect on the answer to the questions posed earlier. Students are encouraged to answer their question in their own words. This recitation is also the point at which students may record brief notes in their notebook for later review and study. Students then would repeat steps 2-4 as they work through the remainder of the chapter.

5. Review

When steps two, three, and four are completed for the final subtopic of the chapter, the student should spend approximately five minutes reviewing the notes and attempt to recall the main points of the chapter. The student then reads each main heading and tries to remember the supporting or explanatory information. Later reviews will also be helpful aids for long-term remembering.

CAUTIONS AND COMMENTS

One of the major difficulties associated with the SQ3R method of study has been the inability of teachers to convince students of the value of such a procedure. Although a number of upper-level teachers have taught the method to their students, the question remains, "how many students regularly use the procedure?"

Indeed, the use of SQ3R must be developed in relevant situations. As the need arises, one approach might be to begin by using the survey technique (discussed in this unit) with the whole class, then add the question and read steps when the students have seen the value of the survey step and are using it on their own. Modeling, guidance, and discussion are necessary for successful learning of new strategies.

*Adapted from Tierney, R.J. et al., "Reading Strategies and Practices: A Guide for Improving Instruction." Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston, 1980, pp. 86-89.

PREPARING CHILDREN TO READ A CHAPTER IN A CONTENT TEXT*

1. Ask the children to read the title of the chapter. Read the introductory paragraph orally or ask a student, who has had a chance to look it over, to read it orally. Perhaps ask how the new material relates to previously read material. Does anyone know something about it already?

2. Ask the children to browse through the chapter looking at any pictures, maps, graphs which might be there. Ask the children questions about details of these graphic aids. Their responses may provide clues as to whether or not they will need help interpreting the aids.

3. Ask the children to consider the written content. Have them examine headings and subheadings. Foster the children's involvement by asking whether they know anything about the topic. Have they ever read about it before? How does this or that heading go with the chapter title?

4. If the author has included a summary have this read orally too. Ask the children to read over the questions at the end of the chapter if there are questions present. Do the children have questions they would like answered?

*Adapted from Durkin, D. Teaching Them to Read (2nd ed.)

REWRITING ADAPTS MATERIALS TO NEEDS OF POOR READERS

Stymied by students who are reading far below grade level? Perplexed about what you're going to find for them to read?

Try rewriting, says Linda C. Craig in the December 1977 issue of the Journal of Reading. The list of required materials for rewriting is short--two items, Ms. Craig says.

1. A good article. The material should be worthwhile, timely, pertinent to topics being discussed in class, and of interest to the students. "Rewriting takes time and effort," she notes. "You want it to be time well spent on material you really want the students to read for a specific purpose."

2. Word lists. She suggests the Dolch Word List, Stone's revision of the Dale List of 769 Easy Words, and the Dale List of 3000 Words. However, almost any reputable list of high-frequency words is OK.

She outlines this step-by-step procedure for rewriting articles:

-Read the article or textbook passage and jot down the main ideas.

-Look over the main ideas, checking those you especially want the students to get from reading the article. "This step will help you focus on why you want this particular article read, and it will also help you keep the passage short and to the point." Ms. Craig says.

-Make a list of the specialized vocabulary and important concepts that are difficult, that are not on the lists you are using, but that you feel must be included. When rewriting, avoid using more than five specialized vocabulary words or difficult concepts per 100 words.

-Make a list of "hard" words or concepts in the article. Using your word list, substitute an "easy" word or phrase. This should help you get started with the actual writing.

-Also follow these rules of thumb:
Avoid polysyllabic words.
Use common nouns.
Underline proper names and specialized vocabulary that you plan to preteach.
Limit sentence length to a maximum of ten words. (Sentences of five or six words are best, she says.)
Turn written numbers such as "ten" into numerals.
Use simple sentence construction and present-tense verbs as much as possible.

If possible, check the reading level of your rewritten material with a readability formula, comparing it with the reading level of the original.

"When you have finished writing the article, type it with the largest type available, preferably a primary typewriter," Ms. Craig says. "Double space, and make sentences one line long, if possible."

If you find rewriting difficult at first, start small, she suggests. Rewrite one- or two-paragraph selections before typing larger selections.

STUDY GUIDES*

Kinds of Study Guides

A study guide is a set of questions or activities designed to direct a student's study. There are many different types of guides. Examples of some of these follow:

The differentiated study guide is one which combines several types of activities which are designed for different types of readers. The assignment of the guide to a group is made by giving certain students one part and other students other parts. The differentiated guide provides the content teacher with a procedure to use to account for the differing reading abilities in the class. It may serve as an alternative to grouping. The activities selected for the differentiated study guide help the teacher account for different reading abilities. By assigning different parts of the guide to students on the basis of their reading ability, the entire group may cover the same material but focus on different aspects at different levels of reading; at the same time, the entire group may participate in the discussion of the material.

The single group study guide, unlike the differentiated study guide, is designed for one group of students who have common needs in learning and reading content material. The single group guide has activites which are all designed for one type of student. For example, this guide might have a series of activities aimed at directing advanced students to analyze a particular political problem. Many teachers use this type of guide but become discouraged with it because it requires a new guide for each group within the class. Although this may become necessary in some classes, it is probably better not to begin this way.

Multilevel study guides are much like the differentiated guides but are different in that they clearly and specifically focus on different levels of compresion. The activities of this type of guide are often designed for an entire group with the purpose being that of having the group use all of the levels of comprehension covered by the guide.

Another type of study guide is the skill practice guide. This guide focuses on a particular reading skill or set of reading skills pertinent to the content area. This guide encourages the student to use the reading skill or skills directly related to the area.

Constructing Study Guides

The first step in constructing a study guide is to decide on its purpose. This decision will lead the teacher to the selection of the type of guide which best coincides with its intended use. Frequently, teachers begin to construct study guides without careful consideration for the purpose of the guide. This leads to a tool which does not work well with the class or group; further, it leads to considerable discouragement and frustration on the part of the teacher. Much of this can be prevented by giving a little time to thinking through the purpose and intended use of the guide.

* Adapted from a paper presented in a graduate class and material in Tierney et al., pp. 63-69.

Once the purpose of the guide has been determined, the teacher should have some idea as to the type of guide or combination of types which will be needed. The next step is to determine the format to use in the guide. Any one of the types of guides mentioned above can be constructed using a variety of formats. Varying the format from guide to guide and within the guide helps to give variety and make the task of using the guide more interesting. Caution should be exercised in constructing guides so as not to make them so complex that they lose their intended purpose. It is important to give each guide enough variety to insure that it holds student interest.

Formats

One of the most common formats for the study guide is the question format. However, too many times we simply give the students a list of questions to be answered as the chapter is read. This is an appropriate procedure but should also be balanced by using other formats or varieties of the format. If questions are used, it is best to have the questions listed in the order in which they can be answered by reading the chapter. In this instance, the questions will serve as a guide and may help to reduce the student's frustration in reading.

The question format can be varied to make it more interesting. Instead of giving just the question, give the question and page where the answer may be located. By doing this, you are providing even more guidance to the reading if it is needed.

Another variation of the question theme is to present the question with its answer and require the student to locate the page and paragraph which either supports or rejects the answer. The difficulty of this type of format can be increased by making the question-answer combinations more inferential and critical.

A final variation of the question format is to present only the answers and require the students to read and write the matching questions. This is the type of format which will lead to more challenge and debate for the students. It is probably better used for students who are more able readers.

The puzzle format is an interesting one because students at all levels like to work puzzles of all types. The puzzle format is sometimes difficult to construct; this is especially true when the traditional crossword format is used where every word coming next to another word must spell a word. Puzzles can follow any number of formats. The following are just a few examples of puzzle formats.

A. Give the term that describes the behavior of the main character throughout the story.

   A. _ _ _ _ _ _ _

B. Complete the following activity by reading your chapter and writing in the word or words which answer the

questions. You can check your work by writing in order the letters from the boxes. These will give you the key word for this chapter.

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. _ _ _ _
3. _ _ _
4. _ _ _ _ _ _
5. _ _ _
6. _ _

Key word:
1 2 3 4 5 6

Categorizing things can be a very high level task. This format can be used for very simple literal tasks or can be used to stimulate much critical thinking. Some examples of categorizing activities are given below:

A. Make a list of the 5 major problems faced by man as he began to explore outer space.

B. After reading the two political points of view expressed in this chapter, list all of the characteristics which are held in common by both.

C. Name the characters in the chapter who participated in the signing of the peace treaty.

The matching format has been used for many years by teachers. It is still an activity which can add variety to a study guide and at the same time be used to guide and stimulate reading and thinking. This format can be made simple or challenging by altering the list of items to be matched. It is probably a better format to use as a summary activity because it does not easily allow for directing the student's reading in sequential order.

Constructing study guides is obviously a time consuming task. There are a number of points which should be kept in mind as this task is undertaken.

1. Make sure that you know the purpose for the guide you plan to develop. Don't just do it because other teachers are doing it.

2. Remember that you are trying to construct a guide that will assist students, not hinder them. Don't make the guide so complicated, confusing, or tricky that learning is really impaired.

3. Start small. Don't try to write a set of guides for a entire book at one time. Begin with a small portion of material and try out your guides. You will never

really know their strengths and weaknesses until they are used with students.

Here are three examples of study guides.

Reading Guide #1
Levels of Comprehension

*Literal level
**Interpretive level
***Applied level

*1) What are the basic steps of a nonviolent campaign? (p. 634, par. 4)

***2) Why did the political leaders of Birmingham refuse to engage in good faith?

**3) Why does Stokley Carmichael think "integration is a joke"? (p. 636)

***4) Why do you think the authors say that the SNCC has become more militant since the early 1960s?

**5) Why did SNCC choose the black panther as its symbol? (p. 637)

*6) What is black nationalism? (p. 639, par. 1)

**7) Why did the man in the tavern say the extremists would end up in concentration camps? (p. 641)

***8) Why do so many people think the racial problem has to be solved in our generation? (p. 640)

*9) What does the term "black Jim Crow" mean? (p. 641, par. 4)

*10) Who is Thurgood Marshall? (p. 642, par. 3)

**11) Why does Thurgood Marshall fear the black militants? (p. 643, par. 2)

***12) Why do black people think black studies programs are essential?

Reading Guide #2
Patterns of Organization

Directions: 1) Match the name of a black leader in Column A with his strategy in Column B. Put the number of that name in the blank provided in Column B.

2) Match the name of a black leader in Column A with the ideas in Column C. Put the number in the blank provided in Column C.

A. Names

1) Martin Luther Kind
2) Stokley Carmichael
3) Roy Innis
4) Roy Wilkins
5) Thurgood Marshall

B. Strategies

_____ black nationalism
_____ anti-separatism
_____ non-violence
_____ leadership through education
_____ black power

C. Ideas

_____ Our philosophy is one of self-determination.
_____ White power has been scaring black people for 400 years.
_____ Direct action is the only way to force the issue. (p. 635)
_____ You can't use color for an excuse for not doing what you should be doing. (p. 643)
_____ Current black studies programs represent another form of segregated education. (p. 641)
_____ Nothing will be settled with guns or rocks.
_____ You must be able to accept blows without retaliation.
_____ We must rehabilitate blacks as people. (p. 639)
_____ Black history is significant only if taught in the context of world history.
_____ Our idea is to put men in office who will work for the people they represent. (p. 638)

It should be noted that these sample guides have been constructed with varying amounts of assistance (page and paragraph numbers) and level of comprehension designated. Teachers may decide to use only one or all of the levels, depending on what decisions have been made with regard to individual students.

Reading Guide #3
Puzzle Format

Match the following words to their definitions and fill in the cross-word puzzle.

expeditions

province (p. 173

Intermontane (p. 173)

pueblo (p. 176)

mission (p. 179)

presidios (p. 178)

basin

irrigation

pioneers

congress

6. a very large region made up of smaller regions

1. a church used also for a school and hospital

4. a way of watering crops

2. trips

7. between the mountains

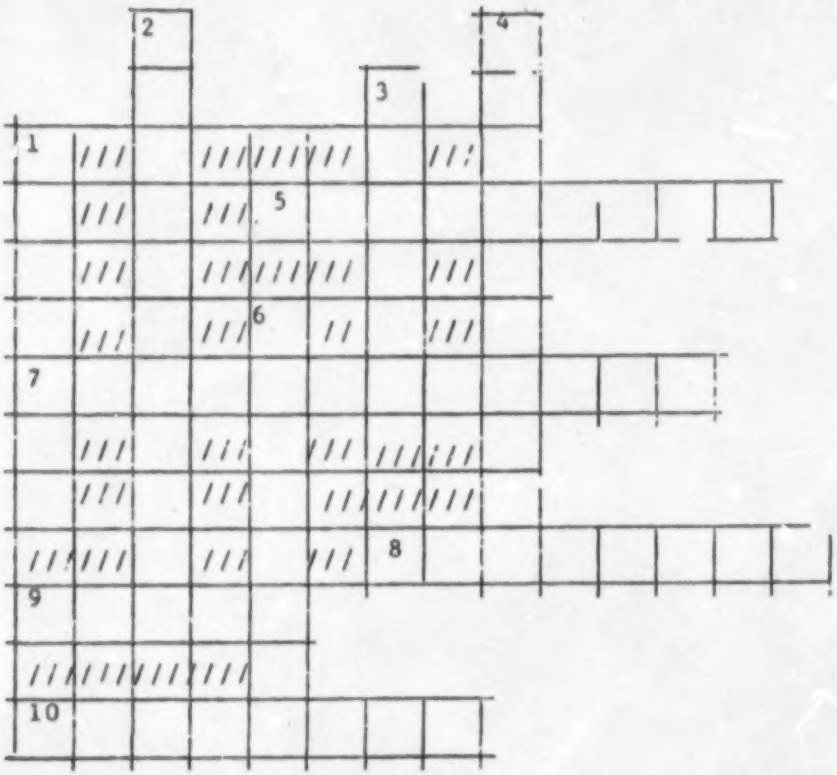
5. fort filled with Spanish soldiers

10. the early settlers

9. a low place between mountains

3. town or village of stone and sun baked brick buildings

8. law making group



AN EXAMPLE OF THE SELECTIVE READING GUIDE - O - RAMA

Unit 7: "Political Regions: How Karen Learns about Our Nation." pp.278-301.

Page 278.
Look at the map on this page. Pay special attention to the location of Washington, D.C. Skim this page for general information, we have already read it in class.

Pages 279-281
Read these pages to learn what a nation is. Pay particular attention to the chart on page 280 which summarizes much of it for you. Be sure to understand the difference between a dictatorship and a republic.

Pages 282 and 283
Pay particular attention to the maps on these pages. We will discuss them in class. How does each one show something different about Washington, D.C.? Pay attention to the words Capitol and capital.

Pages 284-287
These pages deal with the history of Washington, D.C. Read them as background information. What can you learn from the aerial photo on page 284?

Pages 288- 291
These pages tell you a lot of information about Congress. Be sure that you know what senators and representatives do. Be able to explain the word democracy.

Pages 292-293
Skim this section for background information on the White House.

Pages 294- 297.
After reading these pages you should know what jobs the President and other members of the Executive branch perform.

Pages 298- 301
Skim page 298 quickly but pay attention to pages 299-300. We will discuss the roles of the Supreme Court in class. Be ready!

SOME ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LESS ABLE READERS*

Teach Content	Improve Reading Ability
Use pictures, slides, or filmstrips as focus for oral discussion of important terms and content.	Write key words and phrases on the chalkboard. Discuss meanings.
Reshow film used to introduce the chapter. Afterwards discuss its content in greater detail. Raise questions. Encourage children to ask other questions.	Same as above.
Assign a simply written book that deals with one or more of the topics covered in a chapter. Prior to the reading, assign a few simply worded questions about its content. Discuss answers later to see if the book was adequately comprehended.	
Assign a simplified account (teacher-written) of the important content presented in a chapter, along with questions about it. Discuss answers later. Raise other questions if necessary.	
Go through assigned chapter with the children, summarizing key points as you go along. Call their attention to graphic aids. Raise questions about the information these aids relate. At the end write major headings on the chalkboard (simplified if required) in outline form. Have the children tell about the chapter using the outline as a prompt.	Periodically ask the children to read certain words and explain their meanings. Write the roots of derivatives to help with meanings and to show word relationships.
When the preview of a chapter is followed by assigned questions, hold the children responsible only for the questions that require a direct, literal comprehension. If necessary, each of these questions can be followed on the question sheet by the page number on which the answer will be found. If even more assistance is required, point out the paragraph in which an answer can be found, have the children read it silently, then check on their answers. Do this one or more times to provide a model for answering questions on their own.	
If certain topics covered in a chapter are to be further researched by children working in small groups, assign less able readers to a topic for which you know there are easy-to-read books available in the library (or materials center). Again, prepare simply worded questions to guide and focus their reading.	

*from D. Durkin, Teaching Them to Read. 2nd ed. p. 46

Teacher Self-evaluation Checklist

I. Preparation for Reading the Story or Selection

A. Do I develop a meaningful background for the material?
B. Do I present new vocabulary in a meaningful context?
C. Do I motivate the pupils to think about the questions?
D. Do I provide for individual differences?

II. Interpretation of the Selection

A. How do I give guidance in reading the selection, assignment, or story?

1. Do I make use of the charts, graphs, maps, pictures and other visual aids?
2. Do I ask thought provoking questions to guide the reading?
3. Do I remind the pupils to read silently before asking them to discuss or read aloud?

B. What steps do I take to provide for individual differences?

1. Do I group pupils for reading instruction and provide varied interesting materials?
2. Do I adjust the length of the reading unit to the individual?
3. Do I help slow learners with guiding questions adapted to their abilities and understandings?
4. Do I make notes of individual problems?
5. Do I plan time for individualizing reading?

C. Do I plan for discussion to help children interpret and apply what they have read?

1. Do I lead the pupils to think and discuss what they have read in terms of their own understanding and the views presented by the author?
2. Am I developing the skills of critical reading?
3. Do I indicate ways of utilizing what has been read to the solution of problems in other areas?

III. Extending Skills and Abilities

A. Am I developing functional reading and study skills?
B. Am I building technical vocabulary?
C. Do I provide for individual differences and plan for individualized instruction?
D. Am I providing adequate instruction before asking pupils to do independent exercises and informal or workbook tests?
E. Am I assisting individuals in the evaluation of these exercises as a means of locating and recording each pupil's progress and needs?

IV. Extending Interests

A. Do I read selected stories and poems aloud to the pupils as part of the activity in promoting personal growth through reading and literature?

B. Do the pupils dramatize events, organize bulletin boards, use visual aids related to the story or unit, or other creative endeavors as a means of showing interpretation of what they have read?

C. Do I encourage independent reading?

RESOURCES FOR READING IN THE CONTENT AREA

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